97-84054-1

U.S. Congress. House.

International Institute of Agriculture at Rome

Washington

1923

97-84054-1
MASTER NEGATIVE #

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
PRESERVATION DIVISION

BIBLIOGRAPHIC MICROFORM TARGET

ORIGINAL MATERIAL AS FILMED - EXISTING BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD

308
Z
Box 137 U.S. Congress. House. Committee on agriculture
International institute of agriculture at Rome; hearing before the Committee on agriculture, House of representatives, Sixty-seventh Congress, fourth session. February 27, 1923. Serial A (supplemental) Washington, Govt. print. off., 1923.
cover-title, iii, 14 p. 23cm.

406713

RESTRICTIONS ON USE: *Reproductions may not be made without permission from Columbia University Libraries.*

TECHNICAL MICROFORM DATA

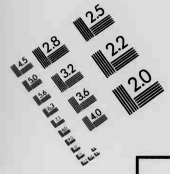
FILM SIZE: 35mm REDUCTION RATIO: 10:1 IMAGE PLACEMENT: IA (IIA) IB IIB

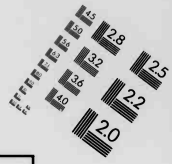
DATE FILMED: 3-26-97 INITIALS: PB

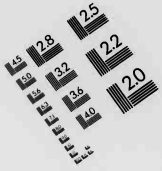
TRACKING # : 22773

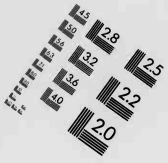
FILMED BY PRESERVATION RESOURCES, BETHLEHEM, PA.

PM-MGP
METRIC GENERAL PURPOSE TARGET
PHOTOGRAPHIC



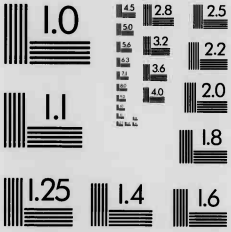






150 mm

100 mm



ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz1234567890

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz1234567890

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

1.0 mm

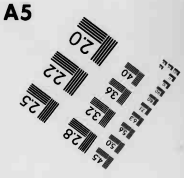
1.5 mm

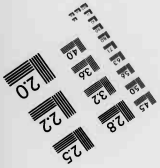
2.0 mm

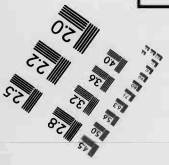
2.5 mm

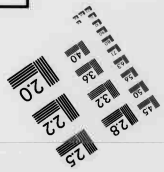
A5

A4









PRECISION℠ RESOLUTION TARGETS

A&P International
2715 Upper Afton Road, St. Paul, MN 55119-4760
612/738-9329 FAX 612/738-1496

308
I
Box 137

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE AT ROME

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SIXTY-SEVENTH CONGRESS
FOURTH SESSION

FEBRUARY 27, 1923

SERIAL A (Supplemental)

WASHINGTON
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
1923

36066

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

SIXTY-SEVENTH CONGRESS, FOURTH SESSION.

GILBERT N. HAUGEN, Iowa, *Chairman.*

JAMES C. McLAUGHLIN, Michigan.
CHARLES B. WARD, New York.
FRED S. PURNELL, Indiana.
EDWARD VOIGT, Wisconsin.
MELVIN O. McLAUGHLIN, Nebraska.
CARL W. RIDDICK, Montana.
J. N. TINCHER, Kansas.
THOMAS S. WILLIAMS, Illinois.
JAMES H. SINCLAIR, North Dakota.
EDW. D. HAYS, Missouri.
CHARLES J. THOMPSON, Ohio.
FRED B. GERNERD, Pennsylvania.
FRANK CLAGUE, Minnesota.
JOHN D. CLARKE, New York.
HENRY A. BALDWIN, Hawaii.
HENCE JACOWAY, Arkansas.
JOHN W. RAINEY, Illinois.
JAMES B. ASWELL, Louisiana.
DAVID H. KINCHELOE, Kentucky.
MARVIN JONES, Texas.
PETER G. TEN EYCK, New York.

L. G. HAUGEN, *Clerk*

U.P. 2 Oct 1922

CONTENTS.

	Page.
Statement of Mrs. Agresti	1
W. J. Mozley	12

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE AT ROME.

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Tuesday, February 27, 1923.

The committee met at 10 o'clock a. m., Hon. Gilbert N. Haugen (chairman) presiding.

There were present Messrs. Haugen, Purnell, Voigt, Sinclair, Clarke, Aswell, Kincheloe, and Jones.

The CHAIRMAN. Madame Agresti, we will be pleased to hear you now.

STATEMENT OF MRS. OLIVIA ROSSETTI AGRESTI, OF ROME, ITALY.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I had the honor of speaking before you two years ago to give a little information on the developments of the International Institute of Agriculture and the situation that was then existing on that matter. The point I then made and laid a good deal of stress on, I think, was the desirability of the United States having good representation on the permanent committee. That has now been secured. You have a very able representative in Rome now, Mr. Asher Hobson, who represents the United States on the permanent committee, which is the governing body of the International Institute of Agriculture.

Since I was last here the number of adhering governments has risen to 64, because the new countries of Finland, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia have joined up and Siam has also joined, so that the total number of adhering countries now is 64.

Mr. KINCHELOE. I believe you stated before that the representative from the United States was appointed by the President.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Does each country have one delegate?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Each country has one delegate on the permanent committee.

Mr. KINCHELOE. And it is financed by appropriations from the various congresses of the different countries?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes; by the various governments. The situation now is that we held a general assembly of the institute in May, 1922, last year, at which the United States was represented by a delegation and a program was laid down. The general assembly lays down the program for the following two years of work and the program is carried out by the permanent committee and the salaried staff of the institute.

Stress then was laid principally on the necessity of developing the international or world crop reporting service, and having it use more freely the cable and the wireless so as to make it thoroughly up to date. That is now being done.

Mr. PURNELL. I did not catch just what service that is.

Mrs. AGRESTI. The world crop reporting service. The institute in crop reporting acts for the countries of the world, just as the Department of Agriculture here acts for the different States of the Union.

Mr. JONES. Do you get your information from the agricultural departments of the various countries?

Mrs. AGRESTI. If they have an agricultural department, then it is the agricultural department, but some countries have the work under their commerical departments and some other countries have a central statistical office; but whatever organization they have to report on their crops, that organization sends their reports by cable to the institute.

Mr. KINCHELOE. I believe you stated before that the appropriation we make of $8,000 is for the purpose of paying expenses and not for salaries.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Who pays Mr. Hobson's salary?

Mrs. AGRESTI. A separate appropriation is made by Congress. You understand that the $8,000 is a treaty obligation and is paid to the institute.

Mr. JONES. I think we appropriated $20,000 this past year.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes; that is paid to the institute and is a treaty obligation. Then there is a treaty obligation to keep a delegate there, but the salary of the delegate has to be decided by Congress.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Do you know how much he is paid?

Mrs. AGRESTI. I think it is now $5,000.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Does he stay at headquarters all the time?

Mrs. AGRESTI. He is in Rome all the time.

Mr. KINCHELOE. How often do these international meetings assemble?

Mrs. AGRESTI. The permanent committee meets every week. It is just like a board of directors of a company.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Do these representatives, one from each country, stay in Rome all the time?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes; they are in Rome all the time, or for eight months of the year.

Mr. KINCHELOE. That is the headquarters?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Do they ever meet anywhere else?

Mrs. AGRESTI. No.

Mr. KINCHELOE. How long has this institute been in existence?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Since 1908.

Mr. KINCHELOE. How long has the United States participated in it?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Since 1908.

Mr. SINCLAIR. It was started by a citizen of the United States, David Lubin, was it not?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes. It was his idea and the King of Italy sponsored it and it was founded by 45 governments, and now includes 64 governments.

Mr. KINCHELOE. How do they disseminate this information in this country, for instance, so that the farmer can get the benefit of it?

Mrs. AGRESTI. It is radiogrammed by us to the Department of Agriculture, and I was told by the department that within an hour of receiving our radiogram they radiogram it to all their different agencies in the separate States to disseminate it among the farmers. It also gets into the press. It is always given simultaneously to the press.

Mr. KINCHELOE. So far as you know, the Department of Agriculture does not issue from time to time any bulletins about the activities of this institute?

Mrs. AGRESTI. They utilize it in thier regular market and crop reports. Of course, this crop reporting deals with staple crops. We would not report on asparagus or on some local thing like that. It deals with staple products that have a world market. It deals with the textiles and with the cereals, tobacco, sugar, silk, which, of course, is a textile, and hops and vines. I may have missed many of them but it deals with the staple crops and also with live stock. That is a new branch of the work the institute is doing.

The function of the institute is largely educational. In a great many of the countries it is valuable for the farmer to know what is going on in crop production the world over and a great many countries either had nothing or very primitive systems when we started in this work.

Mr. PURNELL. Is this the first attempt that has been made to establish an international crop reporting service?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes; the first attempt.

Mr. PURNELL. How long has it been in operation?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Well, the actual work began in 1909, and it was a very feeble brother because there were very few countries that were doing anything valuable in the way of reporting on their crops. The bureau has worked up and has educated the different countries in establishing proper systems in a great many cases and now the crop report is very fairly complete.

The thing we are now actively engaged in in connection with these new countries that have come on the map since the war is corresponding with them to get their crop-reporting systems on a basis serviceable for international purposes. They are organizing now and it is important that they organize along right lines, because otherwise it is very difficult to get them to change their systems, and unless the data is comparable or is on a basis that makes it comparable, it is of very little value for international purposes.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Are any of our South American Republics members of this institute?

Mrs. AGRESTI. All of them; Argentina, Brazil, Peru, the Central American Republics, and Chile. They are all members.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Is Canada a member?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Canada is a separate member.

Mr. PURNELL. Just what is the specific value of the international crop-reporting service? I can see how that sort of service is beneficial to the United States in having its own crops estimated and reported upon, but how is this international crop-reporting service valuable?

Mrs. AGRESTI. I think I can explain that in a few words. The price of a staple product, such as wheat, is determined mainly by the supply. Of course, there are other facts, such as insurance and all sorts of factors of that kind, but the basic factor is the supply. But the price is not determined by the local supply. The crop in the United States might be a poor crop, and yet the world price and the price prevailing at Chicago may be a low price instead of a high one, such as a poor crop would ordinarily provide, because there might be a bumper harvest over in Argentina or in India or in Europe, so that the total world supply would be a large one.

Now, before this institute came into existence this international factor affected the farmer's price, but there was no impartial crop-reporting board to give out what it was. It was left to private crop-reporting agencies to get in this information. They represented, naturally, certain interests. There was nothing wicked about it, but information secured by private means served private insterets. The reports were consequently conflicting. There would be a report that the locusts had eaten much of the Argentine crop, and then would come another report stating that the Argentine crop had not been greatly damaged and it was a good crop, and there was always great uncertainty. There is now an official tally taken on the crops, and that is where the institute comes in and gives the facts for the whole world, and shows whether the area planted to a certain crop is shrinking or expanding and whether the conditions of the growing crop are favorable or unfavorable.

The institute gets in this data and summarizes it and expresses it in a statement like this: It says that the condition of the going crop for a series of countries, mentioning the countries, is 92 as compared perhaps with 108 for the previous year and as compared with a certain figure representing the five-year average. We always compare the figure with the previous year and with the five-year average.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Does it also quote the prices in the various countries?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes; it gives month by month the prices, but, of course, commercial agencies get the prices out day by day and sometimes two or three times a day. The purpose of the price reports of the institute is to give the figures for a month so you can see the tendency of the market, whether it is up or down.

Mr. KINCHELOE. That is the reason I asked that question. I should imagine the facilities of our Commerce Department would really get more accurate information than the institute could afford to get, so far as prices are concerned.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes; so far as prices are concerned. Our report on prices is retrospective and a guide to the farming interests to see the tendency of the market. The production crop report is for immediate use and is the one standard of information that is coming out on the world's supply of the various crops.

Mr. KINCHELOE. How many countries did you say are now members of the institute?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Sixty-four.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Does that include all the large agricultural countries of the world.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Large and small. It includes practically all the countries. I think it would be easier to name those that are not members. For instance, Afghanistan, Tibet and Panama, and one or two others, I think, are not members.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Are Germany and Austria members?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes.

Mr. CLARKE. In our conversation you drew a very interesting picture in reference to these newer countries as to their changes in land tenure and so forth.

Mrs. AGRESTI. That is the second branch of work that is being done, and we want now to develop that. There are great changes taking place, especially at this period in history, in fundamental agricultural conditions, mainly in land tenure. Of course in Russia land tenure, as we all know, has been changed by revolutions, but not only in Russia but in the new Baltic States, and Finland, Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia, to a certain extent Hungary, Czechoslovakia—in all those countries since the war they have changed their land-tenure laws, and the large estates are being broken up and land provided for the peasantry, so that the landless peasantry is becoming land-owning farmers.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Did they break up those large estates by law?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes; by law.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Does the Government itself take the land under the right of eminent domain and pay the owners for it, and then sell the land to the peasants?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Different countries have done that in different ways. For instance, in most countries they have a limit, and you can not own a larger amount of land

than a certain maximum number of acres. Of course in the case of the bigger estates that has brought on the market a lot of land which the government has bought up at a certain valuation of its own and given to the peasants, who are paying for it over long installment periods.

Mr. KINCHELOE. What principal countries have been doing that?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Poland, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, the Baltic States, and Finland. One of the most important has been Rumania, which now includes Besserabia, which was a big exporting wheat area. As a result of these land-tenure laws those countries, from surplus-producing wheat countries, are becoming barely self-sustaining, and in some instances are becoming deficit countries.

You can see the importance of keeping track of the economic effects of these changes and keeping the farmers of the other countries informed of them because these changes will have vast economic effects.

Mr. CLARKE. Mrs. Agresti, explain the philosophy of why they are diminishing.

Mrs. AGRESTI. They are diminishing because the peasant, first of all, has a pleasant mentality, and he is not yet a fully evolved land-owning farmer. The city comes in, and first of all talks about the profiteering farmer, and tries to fix a fair price for their crops. They want the farmer to sell to them and they want him to exchange good wheat for bad paper money, and the farmer, peasant though he may be, is not a fool and is not particularly anxious to take that money, which is worth 10 cents to-day, and to-morrow one-tenth of a cent, and the next day one-thousandth of a cent. Therefore, he is restricting his production essentially to his own needs, because he is more or less living on a primitive scale and does not need the high standard of living you have on the farms here.

Mr. KINCHELOE. It would seem to me that would curtail production.

Mrs. AGRESTI. It is curtailing production.

Mr. KINCHELOE. How is that going to help the government?

Mrs. AGRESTI. It was a necessity of the times.

Mr. KINCHELOE. What I mean is, if these governments are buying up these large estates and selling them on long-time loans to the peasants, if the peasants are curtailing their crop production, how is that benefiting the nonagricultural producing sections of those countries?

Mrs. AGRESTI. I do not know that it is, but it was a necessity, because here was Russia seizing the land by a revolution, and here was a whole series of border countries and the example was infectious.

Mr. KINCHELOE. I do not see how that procedure will accomplish anything, because instead of increasing the supply of farm products it curtails them.

Mrs. AGRESTI. All right.

Mr. KINCHELOE. I can not understand why the government of a country would go into proposition like that.

Mrs. AGRESTI. They did it, and it is really a reaction of the revolutionary conditions in Russia.

Mr. ASWELL. Are the peasants in better condition themselves?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes; the peasant himself is eating much better.

Mr. ASWELL. Then it is beneficial to the farmer.

Mrs. AGRESTI. It is beneficial to the farmer and this lowering of production is a temporary affair. Probably in a decade the situation will be totally different.

Mr. KINCHELOE. That situation will last as long as the exchange of those countries fluctuates, will it not?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Oh, yes; it will.

Mr. SINCLAIR. As I understand it, Mrs. Agresti, the chief difficulty is not in the mere fact that the peasant is the owner of his own land and a producer, but is in the fact that the government is unstable and has not established a currency that will induce the peasant to produce.

Mr. PURNELL. Is not that a rather strong indictment against price-fixing and some forms of stabilization?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Well, I am just stating facts.

Mr. CLARKE. Do not let them involve you in those matters here, Mrs. Agresti.

Mrs. AGRESTI. I am simply stating what the institute does. I am not competent to speak on the philosophy of these changes.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Of course, the function of your institute is to apprise the world of the activities of these various countried.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes.

Mr. KINCHELOE. I can understand your purpose but I can not get the viewpoint of a government that would go in and buy up large estates and sell them to the peasants when the result will be to restrict farm production.

Mr. ASWELL. The fault does not lie with the peasant but with the unstable government.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Yes; but why would a government go out and do a thing like that, that would militate against the production of agricultural products?

Mrs. AGRESTI. The Government was afraid of having its head cut off. This was a result following the revolution.

Mr. KINCHELOE. You mean that it was caused by public clamor?

Mrs. AGRESTI. It was essential if they did not want a Bolshevik revolution in those countries for them to reform land tenure themselves.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Then, it was a question of simply yielding to public clamor?

Mr. ASWELL. Is it not a fact that these governments expect to have a stable currency pretty soon?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes; they hope to.

Mr. ASWELL. Do you think they will?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Well, I am not competent to answer that.

Mr. VOIGT. Do you want to convey the impression here that the peasants are purposely restricting the output of their soil?

Mrs. AGRESTI. I do not think that one can say that they are purposely doing so. They are to a certain extent, but it is the result of conditions.

Mr. VOIGT. Is not this what is taking place: The peasant himself wants to turn out as big a crop as he can, does he not?

Mrs. AGRESTI. If he can sell it for something that is worth while.

Mr. VOIGT. Can you imagine that any large number of the peasants are purposely raising a smaller crop than they are capable of raising?

Mr. KINCHELOE. I understood you to say a while ago that they were raising it just for their own use.

Mrs. AGRESTI. They are, unless they can get a price that suits them and in a currency that suits them, they restrict. It comes quite naturally that they restrict production and feed themselves better.

Mr. SINCLAIR. The latter part of your statement is the crux of the whole thing. The peasants now are well fed whereas under the old system they were starved or half starved.

Mr. VOIGT. Is not this what is taking place: These large estates are being broken up and the peasant is not a capable farmer and has not the intelligent direction that he had before, and has not the necessary implements with which to cultivate the soil like the big landlord had, and consequently he is raising a smaller crop; but he is using a greater proportion of that crop in order to bring about a better living for himself and his family?

Mrs. AGRESTI. I think you have sized it up.

Mr. VOIGT. Now, is there any intention on the part of the Government or on the part of the peasant himself to actually reduce farm production?

Mrs. AGRESTI. I do not think it is a policy. I think it happens so.

Mr. KINCHELOE. In your judgment, what was the purpose of the Government in doing this?

Mrs. AGRESTI. The purpose was the wave of democracy that came after the war and the example of the breaking up of the great estates in Russia and the danger that if the Government did not go in and do this by law, it would be done by a revolution.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Then they did it through fear and not to accomplish any good purpose?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Oh, yes; it is accomplishing a good purpose.

Mr. KINCHELOE. I am wondering what good purpose it is accomplishing.

Mrs. AGRESTI. In the great majority of instances these communities are agricultural communities. They are not communities like Italy where we have half agricultural and half industrial communities. The great mass are the peasantry, and the peasantry were in a very depauperized condition. For instance, in Rumania the mass of the people are on a higher level by the peasants having the land than by the landlord having it.

Mr. ASWELL. After all, regardless of the turmoil and the confusion now, it is not a fact that in the end the countries will all be much better off by having the peasants own their own land?

Mrs. AGRESTI. I am firmly convinced they will be.

Mr. ASWELL. After all, was it not wise for the Government to do this on behalf of future generations even though they do lose now?

Mrs. AGRESTI. I am firmly convinced of that and the mass of the population at present is better off.

Mr. PURNELL. Regardless of whether the peasants are purposely curtailing production or not, is it not a fact that price fixing by the Government has resulted in decreased production?

Mrs. AGRESTI. That is just what we want the institute to study.

Mr. PURNELL. What is your opinion about it? I gather from your remarks before the committee that it is your judgment that the peasants have purposely curtailed their production because of price fixing by the Government.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Price fixing always tends that way. If it is a price fixed below the economic level or below a level that is profitable.

Mr. SINCLAIR. In these countries it is not so much a question of price fixing as the kind of money that is being paid.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Well, the one is practically the same as the other. They fix prices and then they offer depreciated currencies.

Mr. VOIGT. Is price fixing in these pauperized countries over there a matter of necessity for the self-preservation of the people and does not their price fixing proceed from an entirely different motive from the price fixing that is advocated in the United States? Is not that true?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Well, I hesitate to answer that, because I do not consider myself an expert on those things.

Mr. PURNELL. Well, upon what theory does the Government fix the price?

Mrs. AGRESTI. The need of feeding the city population.

Mr. SINCLAIR. To save the city people.

Mrs. AGRESTI. To save the city people.

Mr. PUTNELL. And in saving the city people they are not taking into consideration the effect upon the business of the outside world?

Mrs. AGRESTI. No, sir.

Mr. KINCHELOE. How would that feed the city people if the result of price fixing is to curtail the output?

Mrs. AGRESTI. It is the shortsightedness of the politicians who do it.

The CHAIRMAN. They fix the maximum price, do they not?

Mrs. AGRESTI. They have been doing that a lot.

The CHAIRMAN. Do they fix the maximum or the minimum price?

Mrs. AGRESTI. They fix a maximum price which becomes the only price, practically, because nobody offers a price below that.

The CHAIRMAN. And they do that for the purpose of bringing down the price.

Mrs. AGRESTI. For the purpose of feeding their cities and to answer the cry of the labor people about profiteering farmers.

Mr. ASWELL. And the peasant retaliates by not producing anything much to sell.

Mrs. AGRESTI. By curtailing his production.

Mr. PURNELL. And we have had that very same threat in this country and we have it to-day.

The CHAIRMAN. I might suggest that we have been discussing this question of price fixing for two or three years, and I think we should give Mrs. Agresti a chance to make her own statement.

Mr. SINCLAIR. I just want to ask one question.

Mr. PURNELL. I think it is very refreshing to have some one from the outside come before us who can give us a world viewpoint. We have been concerned heretofore with our own little sphere entirely.

The CHAIRMAN. I would like to know something about the work of the International Agricultural Institute.

Mr. SINCLAIR. I would like to ask one question. This price fixing has not resulted disastrously for the farmers from the information I can gather. They have done well.

Mrs. AGRESTI. The farmers rebelled against it. As I say, I am getting rather out of my depth because I came here to give you information about what the institute is doing. You are interrogating me about matters that I would have to be a much bigger economist than I am to answer competently. I know that in Italy they tried price fixing. They fixed prices for wheat and instead of getting the wheat for the cities the men on the farms were feeding wheat to the cattle because it paid them better that way than to sell it at the price that the government insisted upon. They could sell the other cereal crops that were not price fixed higher than they could sell their wheat. Consequently, they sold the corn that they used to feed to the cattle and fed the wheat to the cattle.

Mr. PURNELL. In other words, it is a fine theory but does not work out in practice.

Mrs. AGRESTI. I know it worked out that way in Italy. How it works out in these other countries, I do not know.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Getting back to the subject of the International Institute of Agriculture, does this institute at the end of the year issue something that would correspond to our agricultural yearbook?

Mrs. AGRESTI. It issues two yearbooks, the International Yearbook of Agricultural Statistics and the International Yearbook of Agricultural Legislation.

Mr. KINCHELOE. How do they disseminate that?

Mrs. AGRESTI. They send a certain number of copies to the Department of Agriculture.

The CHAIRMAN. How many copies are sent out?

Mrs. AGRESTI. I could not tell you that.

The CHAIRMAN. Are they available for general distribution, or just for the use of the department?

Mrs. AGRESTI. The department has a certain number for their free lists.

Mr. SINCLAIR. In what language are they printed?

Mrs. AGRESTI. The International Yearbook of Agricultural Statistics is issued in French and English. The Yearbook of Agricultural Legislation up to now has been issued with the laws in French and the analytical preface and index in French and English. We hope this year to have the whole thing out in English as well as French.

Mr. KINCHELOE. How long have they been issuing these yearbooks?

Mrs. AGRESTI. The International Yearbook of Legislation is the sixth one that has been issued.

Mr. KINCHELOE. You do not know how many copies this country receives.

Mrs. AGRESTI. I could not tell you. I know it is some hundreds but I do not know how many. Of course, it is on sale and any one can buy it.

Mr. ASWELL. Have you traveled very extensively over this country.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Two years ago I traveled across this country.

Mr. ASWELL. How often do you visit the headquarters at Rome?

Mrs. AGRESTI. I live there. This is simply a little trip for me.

Mr. ASWELL. What do you think Congress should do to promote the interests of this institute?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Congress should see that the United States is more fully represented. I would not make this statement except on the authority of Mr. Hobson, who is your delegate, because I should feel that it was impertinent for me to tell you what this country should do, except that Mr. Hobson told me to put this before you.

Mr. ASWELL. We have ourselves asked you the question.

Mrs. AGRESTI. France, you understand, has in the institute Madagascar, Indo-China, French West Africa, Tunis, and Algiers. All this gives France a bigger influence in the institute than the United States has. Mr. Hobson feels that the United States should have in the institute the Philippines, Porto Rico, Alaska, and Hawaii, and if they should come in that would make 25 votes instead of 5 votes.

Mr. ASWELL. How much more expense would that involve?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Each country that came in the first class would have the same expense that the United States has, $8,000.

Mr. ASWELL. $8,000 for each country.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes; if it enters in the first class.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Does Mr. Hobson mean that that appropriation should come out of the Federal Treasury or from each one of our possessions?

Mrs. AGRESTI. I presume from each possession. In the case of France, the French Government does not pay, but Madagascar or Indo-China pays it. Italy, for instance, has in the institute Italian Somaliland and Tripoli, and each possession pays its proportionate part.

Mr. ASWELL. How would this country proceed to get its possessions in the institute.

Mrs. AGRESTI. They would make the request through the State Department. What they call in our terminology—I do not know how you call it here—the mother country makes the request through the State Department to the institute that such and such country which is a dependency or protectorate or a self-governing colony, be represented in the institute.

Mr. ASWELL. We would have to have the colony make the request first.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes, of course. The colony makes the request to the State Department and the State Department reports to the institute, and under the treaty that country has a right to come in.

Mr. ASWELL. If you could visit these possessions yourself, you could probably induce them all to come in?

Mrs. AGRESTI. It would be a nice expedition, but I am afraid my means do not allow me to do it.

Mr. KINCHELOE. What is your official connection with the institute.

Mr. AGRESTI. I am a friend of the institute.

Mr. KINCHELOE. What I mean is have you any official connection with it?

Mrs. AGRESTI. No; I have not. They know I am here and I am working all the time with the institute, and I generally act as their interpreter.

Mr. KINCHELOE. I believe it is a great work and I am simply asking for information.

Mrs. AGRESTI. I sometimes wonder why I do it. I do it because I believe it is a good cause.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Have you any official connection with your government in this work?

Mrs. AGRESTI. No; I am not here from my government.

Mr. VOIGT. Do you draw any salary from this institute?

Mrs. AGRESTI. No; not a penny.

Mr. VOIGT. You pay your own expenses?

Mrs. AGRESTI. I pay my own expenses.

Mr. CLARKE. And you have been associated with this institute ever since its beginning, practically, have you not?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes; for 14 years I was the salaried secretary of Mr. David Lubin.

Mr. ASWELL. You are the only woman like that in the world.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Upon his death I was asked if I would take a position on the staff of the institute; but I preferred not to, because I am more independent, and I make my living by occupying other positions entirely independent of the institute.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Do you travel in the other principal countries that belong to the institute?

Mrs. AGRESTI. No; I have only been here. I have an interest in it from the American end and I feel particularly interested in that end because I worked with the American delegate and I saw the advantage of the institute work to the American farmer.

If I may, I would like to make this further brief statement. There is now a movement in each country of general readaptation to changed world conditions. I have been out through different agricultural sections. I was at East Lansing, Minn., and Ames, Iowa, and at Boston, where there was a New England agricultural conference in session. I have been much struck by noticing that the farmers in this country are awakening very rapidly to the influence of international conditions on the farms. because it happens that the surplus products of the farms find their market in the deficit countries of Europe. Therefore, the farmers have been heavily hit by the reduced purchasing capacity of the European markets. They are waking up to the reaction of international conditions on their economic status. There is in this International Institute of Agriculture a great clearing house for information in connection with this work; a clearing house working in cooperation with all the countries, which is very different from sending out agents from country A into countries B, C, and D, who have nothing to do with countries B, C, and D, and who are looked upon more or less as interlopers. There used to be great feeling in Europe against Germany, because she kept a lot of people spying upon conditions in the various countries. and we wanted to know what they were there for, because we knew they were not in our country for their health or for our particular benefit.

In the case of the institute, the countries themselves are a part of it, and it is a cooperative effort on the part of the agricultural interests of all the nations to follow conditions which affect them in all these countries. It shows the economic solidarity of agriculture. The institute offers a world forum for discussing international policies in their reaction on agriculture, quite outside of politics. I have been around quite a little bit with different international organizations and they all come to grief on the rock of politics. You can not bring people together to discuss questions on which they are not prepared to agree at all. If you were to call to-morrow an international conference on tariffs, you might be sure that the fur would be flying before they were out of it because they are not prepared, but they are prepared to realize that it is an advantage to get this general knowledge of agricultural conditions. It helps the legislator, it helps the cooperator, it helps a man to help himself, to know what is going on. It is the approach to friendly international cooperation on totally nonpolitical lines, purely economic and purely beneficial. It takes what might be an advantage to one and makes it a benefit to all and it returns as a blessing, and I feel that at this time it is one of the helpful approaches to international relations.

Mr. KINCHELOE. How long has our country been a member of this institute—ever since it was founded?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Ever since it was founded.

Mr. KINCHELOE. How long has Mr. Hobson been our representative over there?

Mrs. AGRESTI. He came over last September.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Whom did he succeed?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Doctor Stevens, who was there on a sabbatical year from the Agricultural College of Ames, Iowa; but it is a poor system to have a man on a sabbatical year, because all these other countries, Great Britain, France, and Germany have permanent representatives there. I mentioned those three countries, but the other countries also have their representatives there and have had them for a series of years, and it is practically an international parliament.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Hobson will be there all the time, will he?

Mrs. AGRESTI. We hope so.

The CHAIRMAN. What is the total expenditure of the institute?

Mrs. AGRESTI. It is about 3,000,000 lira.

The CHAIRMAN. How much in American money would that amount to?

Mrs. AGRESTI. My arithmetic does not rise to that. You get about 20 lira to the dollar.

Mr. SINCLAIR. It was about $250,000 the previous year.

The CHAIRMAN. How does the amount provided by this Government correspond with the amount paid by other governments?

Mrs. AGRESTI. It is the same as the amount paid by other Governments in the same class. Each country comes in in one of five degrees according to its own selection. If it comes in in the first class it pays 16 units and has 5 votes; if it comes in second, it pays 8 units and has 4 votes; third, 4 units and 3 votes; fourth, 2 units and 2 votes; and fifty 1 unit and 1 vote. The idea of that was to make it possible for smaller places to come in and select their own place. It would not be reasonable to expect that Cuba should be paying as much as Great Britain.

Mr. KINCHELOE. The United States is in what class?

Mrs. AGRESTI. The United States is in the first class.

The CHAIRMAN. Are all the countries furnished with the same information?

Mrs. AGRESTI. They are all furnished with the same information, and all are under treaty obligation to supply information about their own countries.

The CHAIRMAN. From what source do you get this information, and how often is it disseminated?

Mrs. AGRESTI. The crop reporting information comes through the Government departments.

The CHAIRMAN. You get it from the departments of the governments? Is there anything outside of that?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Nothing unless the Government authorizes it.

The CHAIRMAN. You simply compile the reports of the various departments of the different governments.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. How are they compiled?

Mrs. AGRESTI. How often?

The CHAIRMAN. How often are they compiled and to what extent. Does it give the yield, for instance?

Mrs. AGRESTI. We give first the area planted, the crop condition, harvest prospects, and harvest yield.

The CHAIRMAN. How soon is that information sent out?

Mrs. AGRESTI. It is sent out regularly once a month and during the growing seasons three or four times a month, or as often as any figure comes in that changes or affects the total.

The CHAIRMAN. And it is sent to every member country.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. It is sent out quite in detail?

Mrs. AGRESTI. The cables are fairly brief, followed by a detailed statement.

The CHAIRMAN. What does the department here do with that information after they get it?

Mrs. AGRESTI. I am informed that they use that information by radiographing it to their different agencies throughout this country which spread the news in the various farming sections.

The CHAIRMAN. About how often is that information sent out?

Mrs. AGRESTI. As often as the institute sends it out. As I say, it is always sent out at least once a month and constantly during the month when a figure comes in from any government that alters the total, that is sent out immediately.

The CHAIRMAN. It seems to me that if this information is of any value it should be distributed more freely than it is.

Mr. ASWELL. Is this information which is sent to the various governments confidential?

Mrs. AGRESTI. No; it is not confidential. It is also communicated to the press.

Mr. ASWELL. Do you always communicate with the press when you send out this information to the member countries?

Mrs. AGRESTI. We communicate it to the big press associations that have their headquarters in Rome, like the Associated Press, Reuter's, and the Havas.

Mr. ASWELL. Do they send it out in considerable quantity?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Oh, yes.

The CHAIRMAN. The press here does not carry it?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Oh, yes; they do. I have large clipping books in Rome filled with clippings from the press about our crop reports.

The CHAIRMAN. Does your yearbook contain tables as to yield and area, etc.?

Mrs. AGRESTI. It contains the area under cultivation and it contains the yield and the prices and the freight rates and the production per area, the production per capita of population, and it contains the data as to livestock and the data on fertilizer and the data on cattle feeds.

The CHAIRMAN. And you are now studying the question of insurance and cooperation?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Cooperation, marketing, credits, and insurance.

The CHAIRMAN. How far have you gotten with that subject?

Mrs. AGRESTI. We publish each month a bulletin giving a summary of the developments in the different countries of the world along those lines.

The CHAIRMAN. What is the object of your study of cooperation?

Mrs. AGRESTI. To spread such information. For instance, in 1911 and 1912 Mr. Lubin, who was then your delegate, noted from information that came to the institute that the peasant farmers of Germany in the year 1911 had done a turnover business of 5,000,000,000 marks through the German agricultural credit banks. They were getting that credit at from 2½ to 4½ per cent per annum. The farmers in America were paying for mortgage credit from 8 per cent up to 30 or more per cent. He thought that that fact was worth calling to the attention of the farmers of America. As delegate he sent out some thousands, 50,000 at a time, bulletins about the matter and called attention to what the figures of the institute showed, and that resulted in an agitation for rural credits which led to the Federal farm loan act. It brought over the American rural credits commission and the United States Rural Credits Commission which traveled in 1913 through some eight or nine European countries studying their rural credit system.

Mr. VOIGT. What is the present condition of the world with reference to the wheat supply?

Mrs. AGRESTI. The institute every six months draws up a balance sheet showing what the available supply is with the stocks on hand and what the demand is, and whether the supply is equal to the demand, and where the supply is, and where the demand is. They get that out, I think, about October. I say "I think" because I do not like to give a date positively if my memory is not very accurate on it, but it is about October. The last of these balance sheets showed that the supply was adequate to meet the demand, but only a little over, and in certain countries there is not a positive shortage, but conditions are not very brilliant.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Does Russia raise enough wheat now to supply their own people?

Mrs. AGRESTI. They are exporting.

Mr. KINCHELOE. They are exporting?

Mrs. AGRESTI. They are beginning to.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Of course, they used to export wheat before they went all to pieces, and I was wondering whether they do that now or not.

Mrs. AGRESTI. They exported 4,000 tons the other day. The general impression is that if Russia does export, she is doing so at the cost of the starvation of her own people.

Mr. KINCHELOE. The point is whether in your judgment Russia is raising enough wheat to feed her own people if it was kept at home.

Mrs. AGRESTI. I would not like to answer that, because I am not competent.

Mr. VOIGT. Is it not true that the grain that Russia is exporting is exported for the purpose of enabling the farmers of Russia to buy agricultural implements?

Mrs. AGRESTI. I presume so, but I really do not feel competent to pass on that point, because my information is not complete.

Mr. KINCHELOE. In your organization of the institute do you have a president and a board of directors?

Mrs. AGRESTI. We have a board of directors, which is the permanent committee, composed of one delegate from each country. They elect a president, who, by international courtesy, is the delegate of Italy, because the institute is in Italy. Then the board of directors or the permanent committee employs a salaried staff of about 100 people, statisticians, translators, economists, and plant pathologists, because the institute also has a section that gives out information on the diseases of plants, the progress of these diseases, new diseases that appear in any country, and what means of control are found for them.

It also gets out a monthly bulletin on any new discoveries in the science and practice of agriculture. It is a sort of clearing house on this data that takes the form of the publication of this monthly bulletin. This salaried staff is under the secretary-general, who is the head of that staff. Then every two years there is a general assembly of delegates, and each country can send as many delegates as it sees fit, although the assembly votes by countries, and if you sent 20 people you would at present only have 5 votes.

Mr. KINCHELOE. How are they selected?

Mrs. AGRESTI. By the Department of State on the advice of the Secretary of Agriculture.

There used to be an appropriation put in every two years of $10,000 for the actual traveling expenses of these delegates. I understand that for the year 1922 no appropriation of that kind was made, and consequently the delegation was restricted to members of the Department of Agriculture who happened to be in Europe or persons who would go at their own expense. It would be very desirable that a Member of Congress should go to this institute. Canada sent a member of Congress to the last general assembly of the institute to take a personal view and report back to the House of Commons at Ottawa as to whether the work was valuable enough to justify appropriations, etc. The report that we got just before I left home was very satisfactory. I understand the report was that the work was considered highly valuable. I think there should be congressional representation from this country. Formerly we had Mr. Foster, the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and Mr. Scott, who was a Congressman from Kansas, I believe. They came over and visited the institute at the general assembly of 1911.

The CHAIRMAN. What is to be gained by Members of Congress going over there that can not be secured from the reports we get? We get quite a complete report from you as to the work of the institute.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes; but in this way you would get your own view and it would probably be more satisfactory to you to see for yourselves.

Mr. KINCHELOE. When is the next international meeting?

Mrs. AGRESTI. In May, 1924.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Do you know whether the agricultural appropriation bill carries an appropriation to send any delegates to the next convention or not?

Mrs. AGRESTI. I do not believe it did. I understand that is to be brought in later.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Marsh, I believe you wanted to ask Mrs. Agresti a question?

Mr. MARSH. Mr. Chairman, if I may, I would like to ask Madame Agresti a question. I am Mr. Marsh, director of the Farmers National Council. I know that you know Mr. George P. Hampton, who was the managing director. There are two or three questions I would like to ask. In your judgment, what effect does it have on the men who speculate in farm products to have this information as to the available supplies.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Those gentlemen have always had the information on the world supply. It was then the stock in trade of the price manipulator. The function of the institute is to take what was formerly a private snap of the speculator and make it the general property of every citizen who has a stake in the matter, whether farmer, consumer, merchant or legislator.

Mr. KINCHELOE. In other words, to acquaint everybody with facts which those men once had exclusively.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes; and they always had these facts.

Mr. MARSH. In view of the fact that our farmers have had this information, which is of inestimable value, and they are all broke to-day, is information as to the available supply adequate to save agriculture.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Well, that is a big question. I presume a lot of things are necessary to save agriculture, but I think information on world supply is an essential one. Certain things are basic. You can not act rationally unless you know. Formerly people who had the means went out and got this knowledge and having bought it with their private money they kept it for their private use, and they had a right to do so, and they used it for their private purposes.

Mr. MARSH. Does the International Institute of Agriculture attempt to change the marketing systems at all?

Mrs. AGRESTI. No; it does not attempt to change anything. It gives information. It follows cooperative developments, and if the record is there to show that a certain system is working beneficially, if that is widely made known, then that system will be followed.

Mr. KINCHELOE. It does not recommend legislation?

Mrs. AGRESTI. It does not recommend legislation, but simply gives facts.

Mr. PURNELL. It is just a clearing house for world information.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes. It considers it has no right to interfere in the internal matters of any country, but simply gives the facts and it is available when occasion demands for drafting conventions for agreements between various nations for certain purposes that are in the interest of the farmers, as for instance, in the case of plant diseases. Microbes are no respecters of frontiers and it is of no particular use to fight a plant disease in this country and have the country over the border taking no trouble in the matter. You can quarantine and so forth, but it is much better to have a joint

effort and get an international agreement to enact legislation along similar lines in the countries that are affected and that is one line that the institute can work on.

The CHAIRMAN. Has the institute accomplished anything along that line?

Mrs. AGRESTI. It has a convention drafted that is now being put up for ratification by a series of countries. The cotton convention that was held in Copenhagen last year has asked the institute to take up the question of cotton diseases with a view to international agreements, and that is before them.

Mr. MARSH. I might simply state that in 1919, I think it was, Secretary Meredith cabled, at my request, to the International Institute, and got figures as to the apparent supply for the next year of the staple farm products and the consumption of those products in the year before the war when they were more nearly normal. Mr. Wallace at my request is getting the same information for the current year, and I want to ask if the International Institute of Agriculture makes any estimate as to how much of the staple farm products of the world will be consumed under normal conditions, which, of course, has a most vital bearing upon the demand for farm products.

Mrs. AGRESTI. That is the purpose of this balance sheet that I referred to that the institute draws up twice a year. The government itself states what the consumption needs of its population are or they are worked out by calculations based on previous consumption, and then the institute shows what the supply is and what the probable demand is, and draws a balance between them. That is one of the functions of the institute.

Mr. MARSH. Then if the farmers go broke it is the responsibility of the administration in power.

Mrs. AGRESTI. Well, I could not tell you about that. That is beyond my ability.

Mr. MARSH. In reference to Russia, I want to say that there is a gentleman here who has just come back from a seven months' stay in Russia, who went over there with a number of farmers and took along a lot of farm machinery, and he can give you considerable data as to conditions in Russia, if you want to hear about that.

The CHAIRMAN. Are you through, Mrs. Agresti?

Mrs. AGRESTI. Yes; unless there are some further questions that you want to ask.

The CHAIRMAN. If there are no further questions, we are very much obliged to you, Mrs. Agresti.

STATEMENT OF MR. W. J. MOZLEY, OF DICKINSON, N. DAK.

Mr. MOZLEY. Mr. Chairman, I want to offer some resolutions passed at a stabilization congress at Billings, Mont., on the 16th and 17th of this month, by the farmers who met there. There were between four and five hundred farmers.

Mr. SINCLAIR. How many States were represented?

Mr. MOZLEY. There were nine States represented.

The CHAIRMAN. Give the names of the States, if you have them.

Mr. MOZLEY. Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wyoming.

Mr. PURNELL. Is this resolution in indorsement of any legislation that is now before us?

Mr. MOZLEY. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. What legislation?

Mr. MOZLEY. Both the Sinclair-Norris bill and the Christopherson stabilization bill.

Mr. PURNELL. Indorsing them all?

Mr. MOZLEY. Indorsing both of them. It is a very important thing that these resolutions be incorporated.

The resolutions referred to follow:

"Whereas agriculture, including animal husbandry, is the basic industry of the United States; and

"Whereas this industry has been and is suffering from the unprecedented deflation which followed the World War which has forced the farmers to sell their products for less than the cost of production; and

"Whereas those engaged in agricultural pursuits are by the very nature of their occupation decentralized and scattered over a large territory and as a result are unable to thoroughly organize to influence the market conditions and are thereby compelled to sell and buy in a market over which they have no control; and

"Whereas the purchase and sale of farm products is no longer governed by the so-called law of supply and demand; and

"Whereas the farmers' cooperative and sales agencies are not able to compete with the highly centralized organized power of monopoly; and

"Whereas farmers and stockmen over 15 Western States are stranded and can no longer function under the heavy load which they carry—excessive interest, high taxes, short-time loans, deflated markets, high cost of farm machinery—also all supplies necessary to feed and clothe themselves and families; and

"Whereas from the best authority on cost of production covering a period of 10 years the actual cost of producing a bushel of wheat is $1.60 over the 10 Northwestern States; and

"Whereas over 100 banks have failed in six of these States within the last 45 days; and

"Whereas it is not more credit that the farmers need but a price for their products which will enable them to liquidate their already too large burden of debt: Therefore be it

"*Resolved by the Northwest Stabilization Congress in session assembled*, That the stabilization of the price of farm products by Federal legislation is the only scientific method by which agriculture can be immediately restored to its rightful place in our industrial and economic system; and be it further

"*Resolved*, That we fully indorse the Norris-Sinclair marketing bill and the Gooding stabilization bill now pending in the United States Senate and urge their immediate passage at the present session of Congress; and be it further

"*Resolved*, That copies of this resolution be sent to the chairmen of the Agricultural Committees of both Houses of Congress and to our Senators and Representatives in Congress."

I have a letter here that was sent in by a man in South Dakota that I would like to have go into the record.

The CHAIRMAN. Is it from some individual or some organization?

Mr. MOZLEY. It was written on the income-tax matter, setting forth the conditions in South Dakota.

Mr. PURNELL. Is it concerning either one of these bills?

Mr. MOZLEY. It is concerning this stabilization question.

Mr. KINCHELOE. This committee has not anything to do with the income-tax proposition.

Mr. MOZLEY. He is showing exactly the conditions that the farmers and the merchants and the bankers are in in South Dakota in relation to this subject you are taking up.

Mr. SINCLAIR. I have not read that letter, but I imagine that it indicates the falling off of the incomes paid by farmers and merchants and the business men of South Dakota.

Mr. CLARKE. We are all in the same situation, Mr. Mozley.

Mr. PURNELL. And the more information of that kind we put out to the American farmer and the more hope we hold out to him the more damage we are doing him and the more injustice we are doing him, and so far as I am concerned, while this session is about to end, next session I am going to object to a lot of these matters going in the records of this committee, and am going to object to people using this committee to exploit their wild ideas. I have not any particular thing in mind——

Mr. CLARKE (interposing). Put me down as heartily indorsing that sentiment.

Mr. PURNELL. I think we made a mistake the other day when we reported out too many bills. I have heard more complaints from Members of the House and from people out in my country about that than anything else, and we are losing our standing in the House by bringing in a lot of this bunk stuff.

Mr. CLARKE. And we are doing the cause of agriculture incalculable harm.

Mr. SINCLAIR. At the same time, I do not think we ought to shut our eyes to the true conditions.

Mr. PURNELL. No; I do not either.

The CHAIRMAN. The motion is that the resolution and the letter be incorporated in the record.

(The motion having been duly seconded, prevailed.)

(The letter referred to follows:)

To the Agricultural Committees of the United States Congress:

I am not a farmer, but an accountant, and I know and everyone should realize that every dollar that passes into the hands of any person in South Dakota, my home State, be that person a lawyer, doctor, dentist, preacher, banker, merchant, or a thief, that dollar must first be produced on a farm.

Realizing this, every person must admit that any condition that so oppresses and demoralizes the farmer's earning capacity that he can not produce the dollars that his products rightfully should produce, interferes with the prosperity and development of every industry, trade, profession, and occupation in our State, and to work to remedy this condition at once becomes the paramount duty of every good citizen.

This, then, is the reason that I ask permission to lay the following facts before you, that you may, when citizens of other States lay their predicaments before you, realize that a serious condition exists throughout the entire agricultural region, and this condition is affecting every line of effort in these regions and prompt action is necessary on your part to prevent the bankruptcy of the bread basket of the world with its resulting disastrous aftereffects which will be felt by the entire civilized world.

This action on your part should not be to a measure to extend credit to farmers; we do not wish credit; we want a stabilized price for our products that will permit us to operate our farms at cost, plus a reasonable profit. Credits will not relieve us. We have borrowed too much already. What we want is a price for our products that will permit us to pay our operating expenses and have a reasonable profit left to restore our present indebtedness and lay up a little surplus for old age and times of adversity.

Besides this, no credit can be extended unless collateral security can be furnished, and this bars from participation in any credit relief the men whose collateral is now all pledged on their present indebtedness, and their number is legion.

The War Finance Corporation did not help the struggling farmer, for he, like the above class, had not collateral to secure a War Finance loan; therefore this so-called relief measure benefited only the banks who were enabled to transfer overdue farmers' paper from their note pouches to long-time War Finance Corporation loans, thereby building up a large cash reserve for themselves.

The banks of South Dakota can supply all the money that South Dakota farmers have collateral enough to borrow; it is not loans we want, it is a stabilized price for our products. Last year we raised as good a crop as was ever produced in South Dakota, yet out of 88 income-tax returns prepared for banks by me only 3 paid income tax, and the total amount of tax for the 88 banks was less than $600, while when we had a stabilized price on wheat every one of these banks individually paid $1,500 to $3,000 income tax.

Eight store buildings are vacant in the main business square of my home town, Watertown, of 10,000 population. Over 500,000 bushels of potatoes lie rotting in the field within a 30-mile radius of this city square—never dug out of the ground because the farmer could not get enough for them to pay the cost of handling them. One business house in my home town charged off as bad accounts the accounts of 66 persons always before considered good pay, the amount being about $4,900 up to December 21, 1922; 18 months later only 11 of these persons had paid anything on these accounts and the total payments were less than $300.

Now, gentlemen, what are going you to do to remedy this state of affairs? Fix it so we can go deeper in debt, or arrange for the stabilization of prices for farm product. that we may come out even and pay? The remedy is in your hands, so it is up to yous

Yours very truly,

JAMES HOULIHAN,
Watertown, S. Dak.

(The committee thereupon adjourned.)

22773

END OF
TITLE